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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Item 41 of the preliminary list*
SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
OF THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO
PROMOTE AND CONSOLIDATE NEW OR
RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 11 June 1996 from the representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a declaration entitled "For Inter-ethnic Accord, Peace and Economic and Cultural Cooperation in the Caucasus", adopted at a meeting of the heads of State of the Republic of Armenia, the Azerbaijani Republic, Georgia and the Russian Federation, held in Kislovodsk on 3 June 1996 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 41 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. ARZOUMANIAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Armenia
to the United Nations

(Signed) Ya. ALIYEV
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Azerbaijani Republic
to the United Nations

(Signed) P. CHKHEIDZE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Georgia
to the United Nations

(Signed) S. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
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to the United Nations

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ANNEX

Declaration entitled "For Inter-ethnic Accord, Peace and Economic and Cultural Cooperation in the Caucasus", adopted at a meeting of the heads of State of the Republic of Armenia, the Azerbaijani Republic, Georgia and the Russian Federation, held in Kislovodsk on 3 June 1996

We, the heads of State of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Russian Federation, meeting in Kislovodsk on 3 June 1996, together with the leaders of the republics, territories and regions of the Caucasus,

United by an awareness of our shared responsibility for the present and future of the Caucasus region, which is historically the cradle of peoples of diverse language groups, religions and national cultures, who represent a unique spectrum of human civilization,

Considering the Caucasus as a single integral area and a geopolitical reality,

Guided by the will of the peoples of the region to maintain and strengthen their relations of good-neighbourliness and mutual support,

Realizing the exceptional importance of ensuring inter-ethnic accord and promoting initiatives to ensure peace, security and stability in the Caucasus,

Expressing serious concern at the conflicts continuing in the region and the disruption of centuries-old political and economic ties and humanitarian contacts,

Firmly committed to the generally accepted norms of international law, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic instruments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States,

Declare our firm resolve to promote in every possible way lasting peace and stability in the Caucasus, and to broaden and strengthen the traditional relations of friendship and cooperation among our peoples.

The armed conflicts taking place in the region are destructive and inhumane. They hinder the political, economic and social development of our countries and their closer interaction, as well as the restoration of contacts between individuals.

We appeal to all interested parties to make every effort to reach a comprehensive settlement of the ongoing conflicts on the basis of the universally recognized principles and norms of international law. In this regard, we stress the importance of the peace-keeping role of the Russian Federation and international organizations.

The participants in the meeting welcome the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Chechnya and the efforts of the President of the Russian Federation to achieve a definitive settlement of this problem.

They also welcome the signing of the memorandum on measures to ensure security and strengthen mutual confidence between the parties to the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

The participants in the meeting express their satisfaction that the cease-fire in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict has held for two years, and pledge to accelerate the negotiations process with a view to achieving a speedy and comprehensive peaceful settlement of the conflict.

We are painfully aware of the problem of refugees and displaced persons, whatever their nationality, and shall make every effort to create conditions for their speedy and voluntary return to their homes in safety.

We categorically reject aggressive separatism, manifestations of ethnic exclusiveness, interdenominational strife and religious extremism. We are firmly resolved to promote ethnic and religious tolerance and careful and respectful treatment of the region's cultural and linguistic diversity.

We condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and are resolved to make concerted efforts to eradicate it. It is imperative to put an end to arms and drug trafficking.

We express our intention jointly to preserve and increase all the positive things that traditionally link the peoples of the Caucasus and Russia. Mutual confidence and openness, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and non-interference in internal affairs, scrupulous compliance with all obligations, and mutually advantageous partnership must become the basis of our mutual relations.

We emphasize the importance of comprehensive partnership and interaction among our States and the encouragement of integration among them on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual advantage, and the need to carry out a balanced economic policy in the Caucasus region. The paramount task in the settlement of conflicts is the formation of a common economic area, the all-round development of trade and economic and scientific and technical cooperation, the implementation of joint projects in the field of telecommunications, construction, transport, fuel and energy and environmental protection, and the encouragement of investment and trade on the basis of the universally recognized principles of international law, bearing in mind cultural and historical ties.

Particular attention must be given to all-round cooperation in the protection of the unique natural environment of the Caucasus, the elimination of man-made damage and the results of natural disasters and armed conflicts, and the promotion of international tourism.

We declare that we shall support any steps undertaken by leaders at all levels, politicians, and representatives of parties, movements and diverse religious denominations with a view to strengthening international accord and

peace in the Caucasus by increasing cultural, scientific, humanitarian and other contacts and promoting the ideas of democracy and social progress.

The participants in the meeting are resolved to encourage, as far as possible, measures to achieve the goals set out in this Declaration, develop all-round cooperation between our States and their component parts in the fields of economy, culture and education and in the social sphere, and take effective measures to settle the conflicts in the Caucasus and eliminate their consequences.

We, the heads of State of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Russian Federation, realizing our historical responsibility for the future of our peoples and expressing the will of millions of people, declare our readiness to do everything within our power to ensure inter-ethnic accord, peace and economic progress and to increase the cultural and historical heritage shared by the peoples of the Caucasus.

The Caucasus is our common home. It is our duty to make it a peaceful and prosperous region, in which people, proud of their history and confident in the future, can live.

For the Republic of Armenia:
Levon TER-PETROSSIAN

For the Azerbaijani Republic:
Heydar ALIYEV

For Georgia:
Eduard SHEVARDNADZE

For the Russian Federation:
Boris YELTSIN